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AUTHOR	Lazzerini, Karen
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ABSTRACT

In its first year, a developmental career orientation program for an integrated curriculum in the East Hartford, Connecticut, school system at the elementary level implemented a wide range of "real-life" activities, field trips, and resource speakers. Focusing on occupations in the community, this career awareness project met educational needs and program objectives successfully. A teacher workshop, which preceded the introduction of instructional units, provided participants with an overview of the program's objectives, teaching procedures, resource materials, learning activities, and evaluation techniques. Ideas for next year's career education activities are listed. (AG)

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CAREER ORIENTATION PROGRAM

FINAL REPORT

MISS KAREN LAZZERINI
CAREER ORIENTATION DEVELOPER
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22 PRESTIGE PARK CIRCLE
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Preface:

The Career Orientation Program in the East Hartford School System has been concerned about providing adequate information in a variety of occupations rather than being concerned about what occupational training course a student pursues. Especially in the elementary level, the program is a developmental process which allows the individual pupil to develop more initiative, more self-direction, and more capacity for problem-solving. Each pupil is provided with ample opportunity to work toward an earlier recognition and development of his individual potential through this program study of self-identity.

Children in the elementary levels have little experience in visualizing themselves in work roles; that they remain unexposed to a sufficient range of work models; and that without sufficient stress on self-exploration and self-determination, children may allow themselves to be influenced by inappropriate or unrealistic goals. These mischoices are expensive in time and money to the student and to our society. Therefore, "career education" is an important step to improve on our orientation to young people to the "world of work" by integrating adequate job information early in our existing curriculum.

The efforts of the teachers participating in the program are commendable. I compliment the staff on information and ideas contributing to the foundation of the "Career Orientation Program".

Summary Page:

In essence, "Career Education in the Elementary Schools" is for teachers and students alike to learn by doing; to become involved in projects related to the curriculum (which is not solely geared to social studies but to encompass all subject areas). It is an attempt to create an awareness of the world of work and to concentrate in reality orientation. The children in K-3 have been introduced to a wide range of work roles and encouraged to picture themselves in these roles. Activities such as dramatic plays, art project, make-believe trips as well as field trips, panorama of song, cooking, and classroom displays has emulated the child's learning and has given the child the opportunity to evaluate his own aptitudes and interests.

Each grade level from Kindergarten through Third Grade has objectives, procedures, units of work, activities, and appropriate media--keeping in mind the over-all objectives which are listed on page 5 . Each teacher naturally integrated the program into the existing curriculum in his own way. I have assisted each teacher in developing activities and other learning experiences involved with the "world of Work". In conjunction with classroom activities, I organized and scheduled field trips, and guest speakers at appropriate times.

The following are the topics for the different grade levels:

Kindergarten - the individual, the family, and the school
First Grade - the immediate environment
Second Grade - East Hartford Community
Third Grade - Incorporating the East Hartford area with Neighboring Communities.

The project, although in its first year of implementation, has been successful Teachers have taken an active role in assimilating actual job information. I feel that the results have been commendable. The students have become more aware of different occupations in the Greater Hartford area.

Field trips, especially, have aided the students to visualize work roles which hopefully will lead them to seek out appropriate careers with realistic aspiration levels.

Background or Setting:

Foundations for "Career education" represented the major thrust in the project this year:

Need for the Project

In practice, the existing curricula pays far too little attention to the integration of career and vocational concepts into the basic curricula activities. The broad area of a student's occupational future is introduced by guidance counselors only on the junior high or high school level. The vocational guidance provided at this time is often of the too little or too late variety.

Necessary as it is to the development of career concepts, counseling is not enough to achieve long lasting results. And the effects of inadequate vocational counseling are most apparent at the junior high or high school level. A student who has never been introduced to the process of decision making may now be asked to make far reaching decisions with only limited information. Unpracticed in decision making, largely uninformed about the long range consequences of his decisions, it can only be expected that the student will make some mistakes in his choices. These choices can be costly to both the student and to our society.

Early in a child's life a developmental program can help him develop attitudes toward the world of work and give him a background of information about occupations. We often find that children in the elementary levels have little experience in visualizing themselves in work roles; that they remain unexposed to a sufficient range of work models; and that without sufficient stress on self-exploration and self-determination, children may allow themselves to be influenced by inappropriate or unrealistic goals.

Students on the elementary level show little awareness of the place of work in the adult world or the place of work in their own adult futures. The student who has never pictured himself as a member of the working world is now asked to take the necessary steps to turn that image into reality. He is faced with the necessity for a rapid and radical renovation of self-image. At the earliest levels of education, however, where the development of a concept of self is at the core of the curriculum, little attention is directed toward incorporating a work image in the child's developing sense of self. And the picture of the job world that a child assimilates at this age is certainly distorted in the sense that the image (professional) to which the child is most consistently exposed does not represent a realistic view of actual distribution.

Conditions and Setting:

The Career Orientation Program began January, 1972. A workshop was held to introduce the program. It concentrated solely on the Kindergarten through the Third Grade level in four selected schools.

At the workshop the participating teachers attended a one-half day session. The program was introduced--objectives, procedures, available materials, information and evaluation methods. The following topics were discussed at the workshop;

A. Introduction to the Program

B. Integration of the academic and vocational learning into the K-3 curriculum - Guest Speaker

C. Display of Materials

D. Discussion period

The teachers, then, began to correlate career education with subject matter. Through different learning activities, children, thus, became more aware of the "world of work". Activities such as art projects, role playing, field trips, classroom displays, and producing a movie have emulated the childrens' learning.

The students on the Third Grade, however, are more conscious of the intellectual content of their work, and this leads to a separation of the daily program into definite subjects .... and specialization of subject matter. More time needs to be spent bringing tools to a higher grade of proficiency. Subject matter and tools enrich the present life of the children. Activities in manual and fine arts, excursions, school assemblies and councils, making of collections, continue and are very fundamental.

Objectives of the Program

1. Integrate academic and vocational learning by appropriately employing vocational preparation as one of the principle vehicles for the inculcation of the basic learning skills. In this way learning could be made more palatable to many students who otherwise would have difficulty seeing the value of a general education.
2. Expose the student to an understanding of the "real world" through a series of experiences which capitalizes on the desire of youth to investigate for himself.
3. Train the student in the core of generalizable skills related to a cluster of occupations rather than just those related to one specialized occupation.
4. Orient the student to the attitudes and habits which go with the job performance and successful living.
5. Provide a background for the prospective worker by helping him to understand how he fits within the economic and civic institutions of our country.
6. Awareness that learning is life-oriented and need not, or must not stop with the exit from formal education.
7. Help students cope with a changing world.
8. Create within the student a sense of self-reliance and awareness which leads him to seek out appropriate careers with realistic aspiration levels.

Scope of the Project

Career education, from Kindergarten through third grade, has been devoted largely to the development of the self-concept, exploration, orientation, and an understanding of areas of work relating to the immediate environment.

The project has been enriched through the integration of the vocational with the academic. Special attention has been given to occupations whenever an occasion arises. A follow-up of activities has enriched the program and emphasized the importance of all honest work.

Methods:

A program was written and used primarily as a guideline for the participating teachers. Each grade level from Kindergarten through Third Grade has objectives, procedures, units of work, and activities appropriate for that particular grade level.

The following were the topics for the different grades;

Kindergarten - the individual, family and school

First Grade - the immediate environment

Second Grade - East Hartford Community

Third Grade - Incorporating the East Hartford area with the Neighboring communities.

Learning activities appropriate for all greade levels which will all hopefully be accomplished are:

1. Writing an original play.
2. Adapting a play from a story.
3. Adapting a play from classics.
4. Adapting a play from an article.
5. Panorama of History through song.
6. Concert and Community sing.
7. Produce own telecast.
8. Produce a movie
9. A poetry assembly.
10. Science Fair
    a) Man makes Paper
    b) Man creates New Materials.
11. Art Exhibition
    a) Our Community in Art
    b) The World we Live In
12. Interview People
13. Field Trips
14. Writing a Newspaper

15. Puppetry.

Materials Available for classroom use:

Basic understanding Series

Urban Living Series

Records

Posters

Supermarkets

Puppet Theaters & Puppets (occupational costumes)

Panorama Sets - Urban and Farm

Bowmar Sets

Aids - filmstrips

Slide making Kits

Wooden Play T. V.'s

Pictures of the City

Teachers have been using the materials in conjunction with classroom activities relating to the "world of work". With such materials readily available, much factual information can be concluded. The teachers found the materials very helpful in providing stimulating activities and also discussion periods. However, projects or activities varied,--each classroom teacher provided unique learning experiences. Although the program is basically in its first year of implementation, the teachers and an elementary counselor have provided meaningful ideas for the foundation of the program. Therefore, Career education is fast beginning in the East Hartford School System. And already, students have become aware that school-life and working-life are inseparable.

Findings and Analysis

At first, the teachers were very apprehensive about "career education" beginning on the primary level. By speaking with the teachers and comparing our program with others that have been successful, and providing stimulating opportunities, the teachers began readily to see the importance of "career education". And thus, the results of the program have been effective and the outcome very successful

1. The teachers have integrated the vocational learning with the academic learning.
2. The students have been exposed to the "real world" through a series of experiences--expecially field trips.
3. The students have become aware of a cluster of occupations.
4. The program provided a background for the working world.
5. The program has begun to orient the student to the attitudes which go along with job performance.

Conclusions

The "Career Orientation Program" has been successful. Through observations, I would like to conclude the following;

1. Students have made definite progress in awareness that the "working world" is not remote.
2. The teachers have played an important part in helping to integrate Career education into the curriculum.
3. The program has encouraged many teachers to attempt different learning activities of an occupational nature.
4. The field trips worked well-many business and industrial concerns are interested in the program as it relates to their employment needs.
5. Next year, more schools will be involved in the "Career Orientation Program".
6. Significant data has been obtained through a comparative study in two schools (see appendix).

Recommendations:

The following ideas will be envisioned for next year's program;

1. More schools will be involved in "Career education".
2. More attention will be directed to the Middle school students.
3. Visits to business and industrial concerns will be selected.
4. Prepare a slide presentation for meetings.
5. Encourage teachers to take a more active role in assimilating job information.

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Appendix

CAREER SURVEY
COMPARATIVE STUDY

Students 333
Grade K-3
Two Schools

1. Does know what Father's work is. 226 yes
2. Doesn't know what Father's work is. 107 no
3. Does know what Mother's work is. 256 yes
   (including housewife as a career)
4. Doesn't know what Mother's work is. 77 no
5. Do know what they want to be when they grow up. 279 yes
6. Don't know what they want to be when they grow up. 54 no

CAREERS

Policeman 31
Teacher 53
Doctor 8
Mothers 5
Veterinarian 6
Football Player 11
Farmer 3
Scuba Diver 1
Nun 1
Secretary 5
Mathematician 1
Waitress 1
Special Ed. Teacher 1
Racer 2
Oceanologist 1
Model 3
Miscellaneous 21

Pilot 4
Nurse 38
Truck Driver 3
Fireman 17
Army 5
Dancer 1
Electrician 2
Horse Trainer 4
Skater 1
Bus Driver 1
Telephone Operator 2
Hockey Player 2
Draftsman 1
Scientist 3
FBI Agent 1
Basketball Player 1

Engineer 3
Artist 7
Puppeteer 1
Hairdresser 2
Actress 3
Carpenter 5
Astronaut 3
Gym Teacher 1
Airline Stewardess 4
Spy 1
Mechanic 2
Plumber 1
Social Worker 1
Biologist 1
Storekeeper 1

Students 45

Grade Kindergarten

1. Does know what Father's work is. 22 yes
2. Doesn't know what Father's work is. 23 no
3. Does know what Mother's work is. 32 yes
4. Doesn't know what Mother's work is. 13 no
5. Do know what they want to be when they grow up. 36 yes
6. Don't know what they want to be when they grow up. 9 no

CAREERS

Policeman 5	Engineer 1	Teacher 8
Nurse 7	Artist 1	Doctor 1
Truck Driver 1	Puppeteer 1	Mothers 2
Fireman 4	Hairdresser 1	Veterinarian 1
Army 2	Miscellaneous 1	

Students 77

Grade-First

1. Does know what Father's work is. 43 yes
2. Doesn't know what Father's work is 34 no
3. Does know what Mother's work is. 59 yes
4. Doesn't know what Mother's work is. 18 no
5. Do know what they want to be when they grow up. 59 yes
6. Don't know what they want to be when they grow up. 18 no

CAREERS

Policeman 5	Actress 2	Football Player 2
Dancer 1	Fireman 6	Artist 1
Carpenter 1	Mothers 3	Doctor 2
Electrician 1	Farmer 1	Nurse 11
Astronaut 1	Scuba Diver 1	Teacher 8
Horse Trainer 1	Gym Teacher 1	Army 2
Nun 1	Truck Driver 1	Miscellaneous 7

Students 91

Grade - Second

1.	Does know what Father's work is.	58 yes
2.	Doesn't know what Father's work is.	33 no
3.	Does know what Mother's work is.	75 yes
4.	Doesn't know what Mother's work is.	16 no
5.	Do know what they want to be when they grow up.	85 yes
6.	Don't know what they want to be when they grow up.	6 no

CAREERS

Football Player 4	Skater 1	Policeman 14
Airline Stewardess 1	Teacher 21	Astronaut 1
Nurse 13	Secretary 2	Bus Driver 1
Doctor 3	Spy 1	Mathematician 1
Engineer 1	Telephone Operator 1	Fireman 2
Horse Trainer 1	Mechanic 2	Waitress 1
Veterinarian 1	Hockey Player 1	Artist 1
Plumber 1	Truck Driver 1	Miscellaneous 9

Students 120

Grade - Third

1.	Does know what Father's work is.	103 yes
2.	Doesn't know what Father's work is.	17 no
3.	Does know what Mother's work is	90 yes
4.	Doesn't know what Mother's work is.	30 no
5.	Do know what they want to be when they grow up.	99 yes
6.	Don't know what they want to be when they grow up.	21 no

CAREERS

Pilot 3	Policeman 7	Nurse 7
Hairdresser 1	Special Ed. Teacher 1	Fireman 5
Airline Stewardess 3	Teacher 16	Telephone Man 1
Secretary 3	Football Player 5	Carpenter 4
Farmer 2	Draftsman 1	Doctor 2
Horse Trainer 2	Social Worker 1	Racer 2
Scientist 3	Engineer 1	Hockey Player 1
Biologist 1	Oceanologist 1	FBI Agent 1
Veternarian 4	Actress 1	Artist 4
Storekeeper 1	Army 1	Electrician 1
Astronaut 1	Model 3	Basketball Player 1
Miscellaneous 8		